



# Cristmas in Sweden





# CHRISTMAS IN SWEDEN



Christmas is celebrated throughout December and traditionally until St. Knut's Day on January 13. The main celebration and the exchange of gifts in many families takes place on Christmas Eve, December 24. The Lucia Day is celebrated during Advent, on December 13.

Christmas contains a mix of domestic and foreign customs that have been adapted. Many Swedes celebrate Christmas in roughly the same way, and many local customs and specialities have disappeared.



# HISTORY

The origin of the Germanic word "Jul" is somewhat unclear. Around the year 600, it is mentioned in the Gothic calendar together with Christian religious texts. Around the year 900, the word "Jul" can be found in a tribute to king Harald Fairhair, in which someone is said to "Dricka Jul" (Drink Jul). The pretext for the Jul celebration was to mark the winter solstice when the days start to get longer and the nights shorter again.



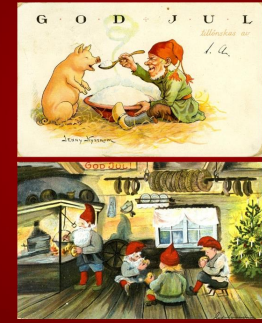






# HISTORY

Christmas Cards from Sweden



In Nordic prehistoric times there was a "midvinterblot" rite (mid-winter blót), which was a sacrificial rite held in mid-winter, which may either mean the same time as Jul (in later sources called julablót), or in mid-January which was in the middle of the winter period. The people sacrificed cattle and perhaps humans to win the Æsir's blessing on the germinating crop. The ás (singular of Æsir) who was especially hailed at this time was Odin, who commonly went by the name of "Jólnér". The Jul was Christianized, while the blót rites were forbidden and abandoned when Sweden became a Christian country.



# HISTORY



The celebration of Christmas at the end of December is a very old tradition with many origins. Among these is the Old Norse Christmas celebration - which was prevailing in Scandinavia in the 11th century - and was celebrated in connection with the midwinter offering celebration. Moreover, there is the Christian Christmas celebration in memory of the birth of Jesus Christ. The earliest records of these celebrations are from year 333. Eight hundred years later this is merged with the Old Norse Christmas celebration.

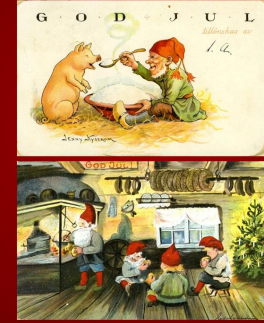






# HISTORY

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In the Old Norse sources the pagan celebration of Jul in the Nordic countries is often described as "to drink jul/yule". The central aspect of the pagan Germanic celebration of midwinter was to eat and drink well. To bake and to produce ale and mead were important preparations for the celebration. In medieval wooden calendars and pre-Christian picture stones, this celebration is still symbolised by a barrel of ale, or a drinking horn. So the emphasis on food and drink traditions was originally a pagan trait of the Christmas celebration

The Christmas tree is a custom that was imported from Germany in the 1880s. The former tradition of giving joke presents, often a log of wood, was replaced during the late-19th century and 20th century by Christmas gifts given out by the Christmas goat (Julbocken) or, especially later, Santa Claus (Jultomten).





Jultomten, or just tomten, is the being who brings the gifts at Julafton (the evening of December 24). The gifts are called julklappar, and are probably a modern version of the Yule log. Jultomten does not climb down the chimney, he delivers the gifts in person. This task is often performed by an old man who secretly dresses up as Jultomten and knocks at the door with a sack of gifts.



The month of December

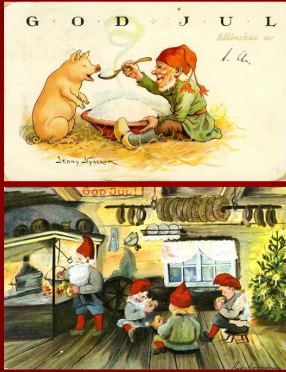
The Christmas celebrations in Sweden usually starts with the first Advent in the end of November. However Christmas decorations and julmust might go on sale in stores much earlier, often directly after All Saints Day. At this time many people start to plan their Christmas and start buying gifts. The 13th of December is Lucia where most of the children and also some adults dress up and have processions in preschool, school and companies. The third and fourth Advent is important for many families as many preparations are done then. Baking and cooking are common activities, just like decorating the home. A big shopping of food and drink is often done the weeks before the holidays as well as the last purchases of Christmas gifts.





Sankta Lucia  
13 december

### Christmas Cards from Sweden



Many preschools and schools start their Christmas vacation between December 17 to 22. Many workplaces start the vacation later, between December 20 and 23. The start of the vacation depends on what day of the week Christmas Eve is on. The last days before Christmas Eve, between December 20 and 23, the greatest preparations are made like, preparing most of the food, buying and decorating the Christmas tree and wrapping presents. During the last days there are usually a lot of people in stores and shopping malls to buy things for the Christmas celebrations.



After Christmas Eve there are two public holidays: juldagen (Christmas Day) and annandag jul (Boxing Day). Most of the families have holiday and are free from work, but some workplaces can start the work again in the days before New Year's Eve. After the New Year's Eve the schools usually have at least a week before the spring term starts, but workplaces often start the work again a couple of days after the new year.



A Swedish Christmas tree, outdoors.

A Swedish Christmas tree, indoors, and a Yule goat.

The story of the Christmas tree begins in Germany in the 16th century. During the 17th and 18th centuries the Christmas tree started being dressed with candles. The first Swedish Christmas trees were generally decorated with live candles and treats such as fruit and candy. Apples were often hung on the branches where the candles were located to make them more parallel to the ground[citation needed]. It soon became more common for families to make their own decorations with paper and straw. Some families preferred to build a Ljuskrona decorated with cut paper. From around 1880, commercial Christmas tree decorations were readily available in larger Swedish cities, the finest of which were imported from Germany.







Tjugondag jul ("Twentieth Day Yule"), or Tjugondag Knut ("Twentieth Day Knut"), or Knutomasso, or Nuutinpäivä ("Knut's Day"), in English Saint Knut's Day, is a traditional festival celebrated in Sweden and Finland on 13 January. It is not celebrated on this date in Denmark (the Knut day was moved in Sweden, not in Denmark) despite being named for the Danish prince Canute Lavard, and later also associated with his uncle, Canute the Saint, the patron saint of Denmark. Christmas trees are taken down on Tjugondag jul, and the candies and cookies that decorated the tree are eaten. In Sweden, the feast held during this event is called a Knut's party (Julgransplundring, literally "Christmas tree plundering")



# FOOD AND DRINK



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas\\_in\\_Sweden#/media/File:Julmaten\\_2017.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_in_Sweden#/media/File:Julmaten_2017.jpg)

Christmas food, with  
Christmas ham,  
Janssons frestelse,  
meatballs, prinskorv,  
red cabbage.

# FOOD AND DRINK

The foods served in Sweden during Christmastime differ per region. But here, too, homogenisation has set in, due in no small part to the uniform offerings of the department stores and the ready availability of convenience foods. Few have time to salt their own hams or stuff their own pork sausages nowadays.

Traditional foods include a julbord which has been prepared with all the classic dishes: Christmas ham, pork sausage, an egg and anchovy mixture (gubbröra), herring salad, pickled herring, home-made liver pâté, wort-flavoured rye bread (vörtbröd), potatoes and a special fish dish, lutfisk. The seasonal soft drink julmust is also served at the julbord, as well as during the whole Christmas holiday.



Dopp i grytan



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas\\_in\\_Sweden#/media/File:Dopp\\_i\\_grytan.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_in_Sweden#/media/File:Dopp_i_grytan.jpg)



Lutfisk



A traditional julbord is typically eaten in three courses. The dishes include local and family specialties. The first course would typically be a variety of fish, particularly pickled herring and lox (gravlax). It is customary to eat particular foods together; herring is typically eaten with boiled potatoes and hard-boiled eggs and is frequently accompanied by strong spirits like snaps, brännvin or akvavit with or without spices.

Other traditional dishes would be (smoked) eel, rollmops, herring salad, baked herring, smoked salmon and crab canapés, accompanied by sauces and dips.

The second course is often a selection of cold sliced meats, the most important cold cut being the Christmas ham (julskinka) with mustard. Other traditional cuts include homemade sausages, leverpastej and several types of brawn. It is also common to serve the cold meats with sliced cheese, pickled cucumbers and soft and crisp breads.



The third course would be warm dishes. Traditionally, the third course begins with soaking bread in the stock from the Christmas ham, which is called dopp i grytan. Warm dishes include Swedish meatballs (köttbullar), small fried hot dog sausages (prinskorv), roasted pork ribs (revbensspjäll), and warm potato casserole, matchstick potatoes layered with cream, onion and sprats called Janssons frestelse (literally "Jansson's Temptation").

Other dishes are pork sausages (fläskkorv), smoked pork and potato sausages (isterband), cabbage rolls (kåldolmar), baked beans, omelette with shrimps or mushrooms covered with béchamel sauce. Side dishes include beetroot salad in mayonnaise and warm stewed red, green or brown cabbage.

Lutfisk, lyed fish made of stockfish (dried ling or cod) served with boiled potato, thick white sauce and green peas can be served with the warm dishes or as a separate fourth course. Lutfisk is often served as dinner the second day after the traditional Christmas Yule-table dinner. Julbord desserts include rice pudding (risgrynsgröt), sprinkled with cinnamon powder. Traditionally, an almond is hidden in the bowl of rice pudding and whoever finds it receives a small prize or is recognised for having good luck. Julbord is served from early December until just before Christmas at restaurants and until Epiphany in some homes.

The ham is either boiled, or broiled and then painted and glazed with a mixture of egg, breadcrumbs and mustard. Beer and the occasional snaps are common beverages to this Christmas meal. Mulled wine glögg, ginger nuts and saffron buns are served throughout December.



Many Swedes visit the service on Advent Sunday, the Midnight Mass on December 24 or the early morning Christmas Day service (Julotta).









## Advent Sunday

Advent Sunday is the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. This is equivalent to the Sunday nearest to St. Andrew's Day,





Celebrating the  
Nativity of Jesus,  
many Christians  
gather on Christmas  
Eve for Midnight  
Mass





A Julotta is a service within the Church of Sweden that celebrates the time of birth of Jesus Christ. Jul means Christmas, otta is the time which is slightly before dawn. The service is held every 25 December early on Christmas morning; at 7 AM in most churches, but in some churches it is celebrated at 10 AM, or as early as 4 AM. During previous decades, most Julottas were held at 4 AM. Traditionally, the service should end before, or at the time of, dawn: hence the word otta is the time just before dawn.





24 december  
Time  
3 afternon  
on TV

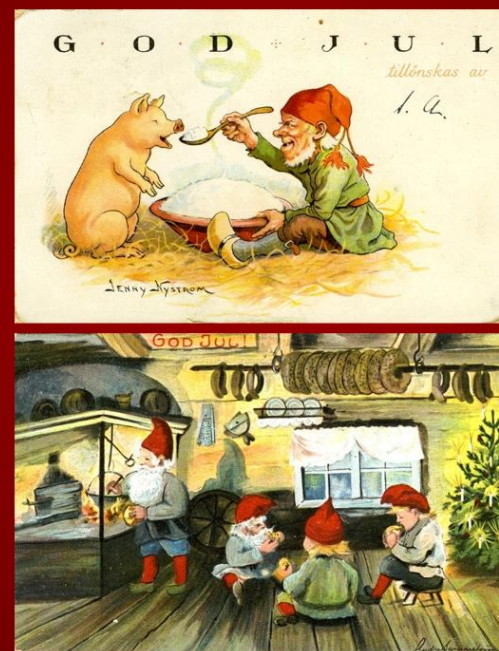
1 hour  
Donald Duck  
& Friends





We need to send a card to  
Some friends, latest 18 december  
Some friends we have not talked  
To in 10 years

### *Christmas Cards from Sweden*







”Julbord”





You have to go  
out and eat  
In a  
Restaurant if  
The boss tell  
you so  
The company  
pays





Jylskinka





Vörtbröd



# Västerbotten Ost





Gravad Lax



Knäckebröd





Löksill



Köttbullar





# Julmust





Julöl









Julklappar





Must buy a  
Tree







# Limhamn Sweden



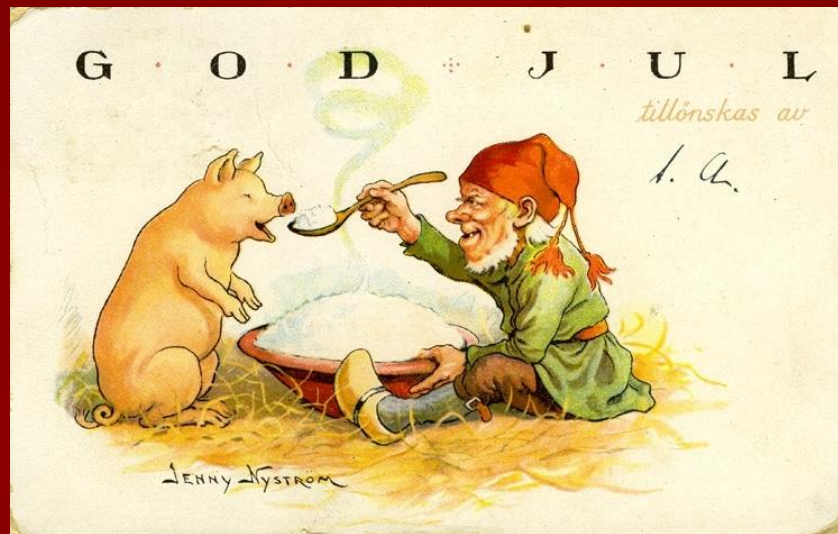


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